

/27 cont./

323 among our herders the developmental technique so foreign to their major occupations.

285 On the other hand, we are not in a position to formulate analogous hypotheses to explain the non-existence of basket-making in this society.

325 As far as metals are concerned, the Sarakatsani use metal objects
(439) which they do not produce themselves, but which they buy in trade. We shall speak of these in connection with their use and acquisition. However, the Sarakatsani make metal blades for themselves and from these they make small cutting tools for woodwork.

824 /28/ The Sarakatsani likewise use another category of raw
237 materials; these are substances used for their chemical properties:
(386) coloring, cleansing or causing fermentation; or even substances of vegetables or animal origin (plants, residues from the working of wool, etc.); serving as agglutinins for dyes. However, glues for
(381) joining wood are unknown, and they use plant cords (wicker, rushes, etc.).

37 Power used is limited to fire, running water and the muscular strength of men and animals (this last only for transport).

322 The necessary equipment includes instruments, tools and sometimes very simple machines; they are made almost exclusively of wood, generally by the Sarakatsani themselves.

(128) The description of this equipment, as well as that of the procedures followed for its utilization will be presented always for the sake of systematization, in connection with each type of Sarakatsani industry.

Wood Craft

The purpose of Sarakatsani woodcraft is chiefly to make objects a) for their personal use (furniture, utensils, etc.), and b) for use in other craft industries (tools and equipment).

412 Before examining these products we must see what kind of tools and wood are used for their manufacture.

Let us first look at the tools-these are: hatchet, adze, knives.

/49/

283 /49/ The Sarakatsani women spin constantly, whenever their hands are free. It is altogether common to see a woman spinning as she walks, her back loaded with a huge bundle of firewood or a tub full of water, in addition to a nursing child.

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Winding: the spinning finished, the spinner frees the spindle and, by hand, winds the thread into balls.

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Dyeing: the natural colors of sheep wool are white, black, and in rare instances, brown. The goat wool is gray-black or, exceptionally, a very dark chestnut.

It seems that, traditionally and even recently, the Sarakatsani esthetic was content with the natural color of the wool. Thus, the decorative motifs of the women's clothing were white on a black background. (The men's clothing, or rather the articles they make themselves do not have decorations).

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However, recently, the Sarakatsani have adopted bright colors (red, yellow or green) for their blankets and their rugs. They have thus learned to dye the wool by using chemical dyes (aniline) bought commercially.

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In order to facilitate permeation, they arrange the wool to start with in hanks which they call vanda. In order to form a vanda they undo a ball by winding the thread around the forearm, that is to say, between the wrist and the elbow. This traditional process is also used during

/49 cont./

283 the preparation of the loom.

386 The rest of the procedure "dyeing with aniline colors" is not of particular interest ethnographically, hence it will not be treated here.

386 The Sarakatsani also dye the fabrics intended for making of garments. The technique that applies to it will be described in a separate paragraph.

The preparation of the loom.

286 When these various procedures are finished, the yarn is ready to be woven. However, before setting to work, the women must prepare the loom.

These preparations include:

- mounting the warp,
- installing it on the loom,
- finally, preparing the shuttles.

/50/ Mounting the warp is a task both complicated and delicate, which requires a series of micro-procedures.

The most important procedure is that which consist of warping the loom.

In order better to understand the detail of this procedure let us suppose that the warp is but a single thread.

Five pegs approximately 30 centimeters high are planted in the ground according to the arrangement indicated in the following diagram:

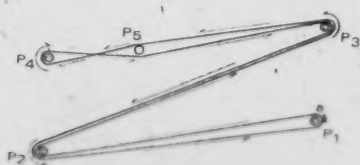


Fig. 37

S /55 cont./
286 and the water /56/ falls on the fabrics (fig. 41 and 42). This
procedure takes two or three days.

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286 The mandani is a wooden machine which consists of a large
cylinder and big hammers, also made of wood. When the cylinder turns,
the hammers beat regularly each in turn. The operation of the unit is

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[3%]

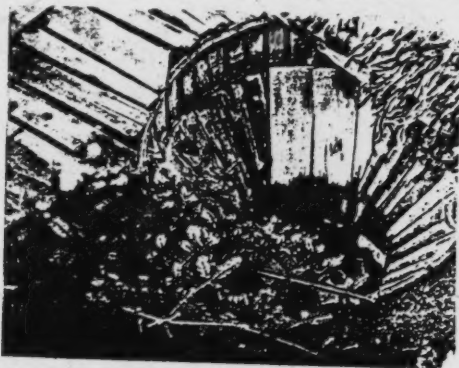


Fig. 41

based on hydraulic power. The fabric slowly unrolls on the cylinder and the hammers beat it ceaselessly. A stream of water continually floods the cylinder containing the fabric, so that the latter is simultaneously exposed to the action of the water and the hammers. It is chiefly twill which is given this treatment.

The construction of this equipment is the work of peasants who also keep it in operation. It is therefore to the peasants that the Sarakatsani turn for the fulling of the fabrics and covers they make.

/57/ The dyeing of fabrics

In order to complete the description of the techniques relevant

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286 to wool crafts it is necessary also to describe the special process
386 used by the Sarakatsani to dye a dark blue, the fabrics used for
making men's garments (vests, jackets, trousers) and women's skirts.

The fabric to be dyed is immersed in boiling water in a cauldron

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Fig. 43

286 reserved for this use. A good quantity of Parella [a type of lichen]
386 gathered in the countryside is added to this water. The boiling
[824] continues until the water turns a yellow color. Then this water is
discarded and replaced with the sera or seria, that is to say, the
water which was already used in boiling the wool and which has been
saved, as we noted above. Indigo (and, recently, the dye bought
[804]
[829] commercially) is added, the water is reheated, and then the fabric
is allowed to soak in the liquid for five days while it is kept at
a constant temperature controlled according to whether the hand /58/
is able to bear the heat of the solution. From time to time, the
fabric is removed in order to be beaten with a paddle, then it is
reimmersed. This process increases the strength of the fabric, as
well as that of the color itself, the sera acting as agglutinant.